

The Barbara Wilensky Gopen Memorial Fellowship

Co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network Programs:

- *Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)*
- *Institute for Community Inclusion, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (ICI)*
- *Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities*
- *Disability Law Center (DLC)*

What is the Gopen Fellowship?

Founded in 2001, the Barbara Wilensky Gopen Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for a person with a developmental disability or a family member to gain valuable knowledge and experience by working with members of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network Programs. The selected fellow will design and implement a project of their choice to gain expertise in their field of interest. Activities are based on the fellow's interest and may include but are not limited to grassroots advocacy, public policy analysis, research and leadership development. The fellow also attends local and national public policy forums to broaden his/her knowledge on current disability topics. The Gopen fellow works 20 hours per week. The one-year award includes a stipend of \$20,000 plus fringe benefits.

The fellowship offers an educational and supportive environment designed for an individual who has personal advocacy experience to start working in the professional disability field. As fellows choose their project design, develop their work plan, and research and create their final product, they are mentored by Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) and Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) staff to develop the skills they need, understand how the system works, and learn how they can create change.

The Fellowship was established to honor lifelong disability advocate Barbara Wilensky Gopen. Barbara was a person with a disability who made a lifetime commitment to advocating on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. She was a longtime member of the MA Developmental Disabilities Council, where she served as a leader for many years.

Who is eligible?

The Barbara Wilensky Gopen Memorial Fellowship is open to any individual with a developmental disability or a family member living in Massachusetts. The fellowship is designed for applicants who seek to increase their knowledge and skills in developmental disabilities. Eligible applicants do not have professional work experience in the field, nor do they have advanced or professional training in related fields. Gopen fellowship applicants may have disability or advocacy experience on a personal or volunteer level.

What have past fellows accomplished?

- 2008 – Caroline vanBruinswaardt (parent, current fellow) - Is presently researching and developing a curriculum to facilitate social inclusion for third grade children with non-apparent disabilities
- 2007 – Shannon McCue (self-advocate) - Researched and produced a guide to accessible Community Technology Centers
- 2006 – Elisabetta Costantini (parent) - Researched and developed integrated recreational opportunities for teens and young adults with disabilities
- 2005 - John Anton (self-advocate) - Developed a legislative advocacy workshop for self-advocates
- 2004 - Donna Kulpa (parent) - Wrote a guide to accessible transportation in southeastern Massachusetts
- 2003 - Rebecca Goniwich (parent) - Created a workshop on Positive Behavior Supports for teachers and parents of children with developmental disabilities
- 2002 - Evelyne Milorin (parent) - Developed an informational audio and video tape for the Haitian community
- 2001 - Sandy Houghton (parent and self-advocate) - Developed a leadership curriculum for self-advocates.

Basic requirements for the Barbara Wilensky Gopen Fellowship

- Work a minimum of 20 hours per week for a period of 12 months. Most of this time will be spent designing and implementing a project conceptualized by the selected Fellow.
- Spend at least two days per week working at the Institute for Community Inclusion in Boston and one day per month at the MA Developmental Disabilities Council in Quincy.
- Attend Friday morning LEND Fellowship classes in Boston (no summer session).
- Participate in training and other leadership activities at ICI.
- Attend conferences, trainings and other events on disability advocacy and public policy.
- Attend quarterly MDDC Council meetings. Present the highlights and accomplishments of the Fellowship at an ICI staff meeting and the MDDC's December 2009 quarterly meeting.
- If appropriate, give a presentation at a regional or national meeting in conjunction with other individuals or colleagues (paper, poster, or verbal presentation).

Timeline

▪ Mid-August, 2008:	Application period begins
▪ Friday, October 3, 2008:	Applications due at 5pm
▪ Friday, November 7th:	Applicants notified of finalist status
▪ Week of November 16th:	Finalist interviews
▪ Week of November 23rd:	Finalists notified of committee's decision
▪ January 1, 2009:	Fellowship begins

How do I apply?

The deadline to submit applications for the 2009 fellowship is **5:00pm on Friday, October 3rd, 2008.**

The application will consist of:

(1) a brief written proposal (2-4 pages) which includes:

- the applicant's personal disability experience
- reason for applying and description of what the applicant hopes to achieve during the twelve month Fellowship
- the proposed project or study activity, including reasoning for addressing the chosen topic
- goal, objectives and projected accomplishments for the proposed project
- the applicant's vision for their post-fellowship role in the disability field.

(2) applicant's resume

(3) three letters of reference.

ICI staff can offer assistance with these application materials. Applicants will be judged on the originality of their proposed project, their ability to implement the proposed project and their potential to benefit from the Fellowship experience. The review committee will interview all finalists. The recipient of the 2009 Gopen Fellowship will be announced in late November.

Please send applications to:

David T. Helm, Ph.D.
Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
David.helm@childrens.harvard.edu

For more information please contact:

David Helm at ICI
857-218-4327 (voice)
david.helm@childrens.harvard.edu

This information is posted on the ICI website (www.communityinclusion.org) and the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council website (www.mass.gov/mddc).
